GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1301
ANSWERED ON:08.03.2007
SUICIDES AND FRATRICIDAL KILLINGS IN ARMED FORCES
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Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cases of suicides and fratricidal killings in the Armed Forces have increased in the last few months;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the factors attributed to these suicides and fratricidal killings;

(d) the compensation likely to be provided to the families of the deceased;

(e) whether the grievances redressal machinery is not effective in the Armed Forces to tackle such suicides and fratricidal killings; and

(f) if so, the concrete steps contemplated by the Government to check such cases?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) There has been no increase in suicides and fratricidal killings in the last few months.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The main reasons attributed to such incidents are perceived grievances due to harassment by seniors, domestic problems, marital discord, depression, denial or delay in grants of leave, argument with colleagues, etc.

(d) The following terminal benefits are available:

(i) Family Pension − In case of suicides, @ 50% of last pay drawn for 7 years and thereafter 30% of the last pay drawn for life or upto remarriage. In case of fratricidal killings, @ 60% of last pay drawn for life.

(ii) Death Cum Retirement Gratuity (DCRG) − Half month's pay for each completed six monthly period of qualifying service subject to maximum of 33 times of pay or Rs.3.5 lakhs whichever is less.

(iii) Army Group Insurance Fund (AGIF) − Rs.15 lakhs to Next to Kin of officers and Rs.7.5 lakhs for Next of Kin of Personnel Below Officer Rank.

(iv) Armed Forces Personnel Provident Fund (AFPPF) − The credit balance of AFPP of the deceased.

(v) Leave Encashment − Pay for the accumulated leave of the deceased.

(vi) One Time Grant − Rs.5,000/- from Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA).

(e) & (f): There is an effective grievances redressal machinery in the Armed Forces to tackle suicides and fratricidal killings. Following measures have already been taken by the Government to check such cases:-

(i) 50 Junior Commissioned Officers (JCO) from Army Medial Corps have been trained as counsellors in Northern and Eastern Commands, where troops are engaged in counter insurgency operations.

(ii) Religious Teachers, JCOs of Army Education Corps and Regimental Medical Officers have been identified as 'Psychological Health Mentors' at unit level and their services are being utilized accordingly.

(iii) Training capsules on relaxation exercise including Yoga and Pranayam have been introduced.

(iv) Rotation of units and individuals to minimize exposure to stress is being implemented.

(v) Leave policy has been liberalized permitting splitting of casual and annual leave.

(vi) All Chief Ministers have been requested to make the civil administration more responsive to the problems of serving soldiers and their families.

(vii) Better man management and prompt attendance of grievances at unit level.

(viii) Improved accessibility of leaders and frequent interaction of junior leaders with the soldiers.

(ix) Steps are being initiated to strengthen Rajya Sainik Boards and Zilla Sainik Boards in all States to take necessary follow up action on the grievances of soldiers in their home towns/villages.